Overseas promotional activities undertaken by ITDC

*384. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE . Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the highlights of the promotional activities undertaken by the Department of Tourism, overseas, during the last three years till date;

(b) whether these promotional activities yielded positive results, and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Promotional activities being undertaken in the overseas markets include publicity campaigns in the print and electronic media, participation in international Travel Marts, fairs and exhibitions, organising seminars, India Evenings, Travel Workshops etc. and extending hospitality to media and travel related persons to familiarise them with Indian tourism product.

(b) and (c): The promotional efforts have helped in increasing foreign tourist arrivals in the country by 11.3% and the foreign exchange earnings by 34.2% during 1992 as compared to the previous year.

Criteria for fixing domestic air fares

*385. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:
SHRI DIGVIIAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION & TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any criteria has been laid down by Government for fixing domestic air fares;

(b) whether the criteria followed by the Indian Airlines is different from that of the private airlines; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) *An* airline operator fixes its tariff after taking into account its cost structure and what the traffic can bear. In the case of Indian Airlines, socio-economic factors have also been one of the parameters for fixing fares, particularly for linking less accessible areas. Fares of Indian Airlines are also subject to approval of the Government under Section 7(2)(i) of the Air Corporations Act, 1953.

In so far as Air Taxi Services are concerned, an earlier stipulation that air taxi operators should not charge fares lower than those of Indian Airlines and Vayudoot on prorated basis was removed in pursuance of the suo moto statement made in the Parliament by Shri Arif Mohmed Khan the then Minister for Energy and Civil Nation on 11th April, 1990.

Setting up of a Gold Bank

*386. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are examining a proposal to set up a Gold Bank;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) by when this Bank will start functioning ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The objectives behind setting up a Gold Bank are to mobilise gold from the people, increase the gold reserve and partly to utilise the gold for raising foreign currency loans for developmental programmes. The details of the proposal are being exa-mind by Government in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India.

(c) Various aspects of ihe Gold Bank Scheme, including it's viability are currently being evaluated by the High Level Committee on Balance of Payments under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan. This report is in an advanced stage of finalisation. Government would take a view on setting up the Gold Bank after this report is submitted to Government.